

REMARKS**Summary of the Office Action**

Claims 1, 7-8, 14-20 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiraishi et al. (US, 6, 538,759).

Claims 3-5, 10-12, 21 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al.

Claims 2 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al. and further in view of Bloomquist et al. (US 6,594,034).

Claims 6 and 13 are indicated to contain allowable subject matter.

Summary of Response to the Office Action

Applicants amend independent claims 1 and 20 by incorporating the features recited in dependent claim 6, amend independent claim 8 and 15 by incorporating the features recited in dependent claim 13 to further define the invention, and cancel independent claims 21-23 and dependent claims 6 and 13 without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1-5, 7-12 and 14-20 are presently pending for consideration.

Consideration and Acknowledgement of IDS

Applicants bring an attention to the Examiner that an IDS under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c) including PTO Form 1449 was filed on January 9, 2006 citing six (6) references. Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified IDS was filed ONE DAY before the mailing date of Final Office Action dated January 10, 2006, and the Office has not formally acknowledged the cited references listed on the Form 1449. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider and acknowledge the six (6) references listed on the PTO form 1449 by returning a copy of an initialed PTO Form 1449 filed on January 9, 2006 in the next

communication. In order to assist the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit a copy of return postcard dated January 9, 2006, confirming the receipt of the original IDS filed on January 9, 2006 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c) by the USPTO and a copy of as-filed Form 1449 citing six references for the Examiner's reference. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that since the conditions as set forth under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c) is satisfied, no additional fee is required.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 7-8, 14-20 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiraishi et al. (US, 6, 538,759); claims 3-5, 10-12, 21 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al.; and claims 2 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al. and further in view of Bloomquist et al. (US 6,594,034). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of all the claims at least for the following reasons.

Independent claims 1 and 20 have been amended by incorporating the features of dependent claim 6 and independent claims 8 and 15 have been amended by incorporating the features of dependent claim 13. In addition, claims 21-23 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully submit that the features of dependent claims 6 and 13 are indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that by amending independent claims in a manner described above, the amended independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 20 clearly distinguish over the applied prior art, Hiraishi et al. and Bloomquist et al., whether taken singly or combined. Further more Applicants respectfully submit that Hiraishi et al. and Bloomquist et al., whether taken singly or combined, fails to teach or suggest at least the features of amended independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 20, hence dependent claims 2-5, 7, 9-12, 14 and 16-19.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully assert that since Hiraishi et al. fails to teach or suggest every element of at least amended independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 20, then Hiraishi et al. fails to anticipate at least amended independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 20, and dependent claims 2-5, 7, 9-12, 14 and 16-19. Furthermore, Applicants assert that the Office Action does not rely on Bloomquist et al. to remedy the deficiencies of Hiraishi et al. In addition, Applicants respectfully assert that Bloomquist et al. cannot remedy the deficiencies of Hiraishi et al.

Thus, in light of arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a) should be withdrawn because the novel combinations of features recited in the amended independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 20 are neither taught nor suggested by any of the applied references, whether taken singly or in combination.

CONCLUSION

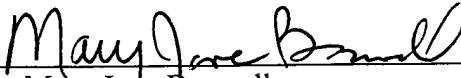
In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310.

If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.R.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above,
such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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